

State Legislators, DNREC Secretary Garvin Open 2017 Fort Delaware Season

DELAWARE CITY – Surrounded by children from the Delaware City Police Athletic League (PAL), State Senator Nicole Poore, State Representative Valerie Longhurst, DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin, representatives from the Delaware River and Bay Authority, and Ray Bivens, director of DNREC's Division of Parks and Recreation, today cut the ribbon to celebrate the start of the Forts Ferry Crossing service and the first day of 2017 season at the Civil War-era attraction, Fort Delaware.

The Forts Ferry Crossing's vessel, the Delafort, has transported visitors from the docks in Delaware City across the Delaware River to Fort Delaware since 1997. The ferry service connects Delaware City, DE with Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island and Fort Mott in Pennsville, NJ.

"We're celebrating not only the opening of the season for historic Fort Delaware but also this year's maiden voyage of the Forts Ferry, which is an exciting and fun experience in itself," said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. "Amazingly, over the years of our longstanding partnership with the Delaware River and Bay Authority, more than 100,000 visitors have been ferried to the fort, and we thank the DRBA for making this unique adventure possible. Fort Delaware is where history comes alive and it's a spectacular tourist stop along the Delaware Bayshore Byway, and an important part of our Delaware Bayshore initiative."

"The importance of tourism to Delaware's economy cannot be overstated," said State Senator Nicole Poore. "Delaware is blessed with a variety of events, activities and attractions for residents and visitors alike. I'm particularly proud of

our state parks system and Fort Delaware is at the top of list. What a treasure!"

"Fort Delaware is one of 17 state parks in Delaware and each has something unique and special to offer our residents and visitors," said State Representative Valerie Longhurst. "Fort Delaware is a legendary Civil War-era attraction and the Forts Ferry Crossing is a time machine transporting its passengers back to a bygone era. It's a history lesson you'll never forget."

Located on Pea Patch Island, Fort Delaware, part of DNREC's Division of Parks and Recreation, has been restored and comes alive with interpreters who demonstrate what life was like during the Civil War era. Visitors experience Civil War life through living history and museum theater programs at the fortress that was once home to nearly 33,000 prisoners, garrison, and civilians.

From there, a short ferry ride across the Delaware River is Fort Mott, N.J. Fort Mott was fully garrisoned until 1922 and was staffed by a detachment of caretakers until the post was abandoned in 1944. Today, the Ordnance Warehouse holds a small museum with displays on the fort as well as on the local area. Guided tours are available upon request of the Fire Control Tower that rises 53 feet into the air, keeping a watchful eye on the approaches of the Delaware River.

Following a self-guided tour of Fort Mott, visitors can take a short walk to [Finn's Point National Cemetery](#), the final resting-place for 2,400 Confederate prisoners who died at Fort Delaware. Admission to Fort Mott is free.

The Forts Ferry Crossing will operate on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays through mid-June. Beginning June 14 and continuing through Labor Day, the Forts Ferry Crossing will begin operating Wednesday through Sunday and holidays from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The cost is \$12 for adults and \$7 for

children 2-12. Children under the age of 2 are free. The cost includes admission to Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island. Visitors take a one-half-mile ferry ride from Delaware City to Pea Patch Island. A jitney provides transport from the island dock to the granite and brick fortress. Fort Mott is free. Additional information on the Forts Ferry Crossing is available at www.fortsferrycrossing.com

About the Delaware River and Bay Authority

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages corporate and aviation properties through its economic development powers – two airports in New Jersey (Millville Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (New Castle Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, please visit www.drba.net.

About Fort Mott State Park

Fort Mott was fully garrisoned until 1922 and was staffed by a detachment of caretakers until the post was abandoned in 1944. Today, the Ordnance Warehouse holds a small museum with displays on the fort as well as on the local area. Guided tours are available upon request of the Fire Control Tower that rises 53 feet into the air, keeping a watchful eye on the approaches of the Delaware River. Following your self-guided tour of the Fort, take a short walk to [Finn's Point National Cemetery](#), the final resting-place for 2,400 Confederate prisoners who died at Fort Delaware.

About Fort Delaware State Park

Located on Pea Patch Island, Fort Delaware has been restored and is alive with interpreters who put a human face on history. Visitors experience Civil War life through living

history and museum theater programs at the fortress that was once home to nearly 33,000 prisoners, garrison, and civilians. Prepare to be awed by its 32-foot-tall, 30-foot-thick granite walls with gun emplacements and an authentic 8" cannon—the only cannon of its kind still fired in America. A jitney provides transport from the island dock to the granite and brick fortress.